



**NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND
SPACE ADMINISTRATION**

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NEWS CONFERENCE ON

SPACE SHUTTLE

PARTICIPANTS:

DR. J. C. FLETCHER, Administrator

DR. GEORGE M. LOW, Deputy Administrator

MR. DALE MYERS, Associate Administrator,
Office of Manned Space Flight

DONNELLY: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We will have at the outset a brief opening statement by Dr. Fletcher, after which we will throw it open to questions and answers which will be fielded by Dr. Fletcher, Dr. Low and Dale Myers.

There are press releases and some collateral shuttle material available for members of the press in the back of the room.

Dr. Fletcher?

FLETCHER: Good afternoon, gentlemen and ladies. I first want to apologize for the two-hour delay which was unavoidable from my standpoint, since the Senate hearings continued on this afternoon.

As you know, NASA has today made the final decision regarding the shuttle booster configuration. We have decided upon a recoverable, reusable solid rocket, parallel burn booster. We since January have been studying both liquid and solid and have found that both the liquid and solid boosters are technically feasible. The choice was made in favor of the solid parallel burn because of lower cost and lower technical risk.

The cost estimate now for the development of the entire shuttle is \$5.15 billion as compared with the previous estimate of \$5.5 billion.

We expect to have a request for proposal out to industry this Friday or perhaps the following Monday. We have not yet made the site selection for launch and landing, but we expect to shortly. We have not done so because I have not yet had time to meet with the site selection board, the special board set up by NASA for this purpose.

It does look though at this time as if inland sites are unlikely because of the requirement for recoverability of the booster.

In summary, I think we have made the right decision. We have made the decision at the right time. And I think it is the right price.